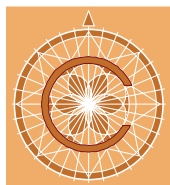CHEMONICS INTERNATIONAL INC.

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Knowledge Stations ICT –   Tourism Program
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Table of Contents

Executive Summary

The long term objective of the tourism sector in Jordan is to double the tourism economy by the year 2010. The Jordan's National Tourism Strategy 2004 – 2010, outlines the methodology to achieve this in four pillars:

– Pillar 1, Strengthen Tourism Marketing;
– Pillar 2, Support Product Development and Competitiveness;
– Pillar 3, Develop Human Resources; and
– Pillar 4, Provide Effective Institutional and Regulatory Framework.

The KS – Tourism Program will directly support the Pillars 1, 2 and 3 through using ICT in the development of new tourism related products and services, and in their marketing and promotion locally and internationally on the web; all the time aiming at developing the citizen through tourism awareness raising and training. With this spirit in mind, and the goal that the program contributes to the Station's financial sustainability, the project concepts for the KS-Tourism projects have been tackled.

Moreover, the program is affiliated with three out of the 12 tourism segments that the Strategy is targeting. Those are the cultural heritage/living culture, eco-tourism, and adventure tourism segments. Acting as a public private partnership it adopts project concepts that tackle one or more of those niches and concentrate, for each potential tourism segment, on the points that the Strategy noted as main actions for Jordan to focus on, namely:

– attracting high yield visitors,
– increasing their average length of stay,
– developing new and niche products,
– enhancing the visitors' experience,
– mounting international marketing

The five main aspects that are under consideration within the pilot project concept are:

1- The building of digital content of the local community

2- The use of tourism in ensuring the sustainability of the Knowledge Stations-the main ICT community outreach initiative

3- Using Internet to bridge the gap between rural communities across the country and the rest of urban Jordan

4- The use of ICT in promoting Jordan's culture and tourism by means of the internet as well as communication media, exposing Jordanian villages to various foreign and local cultures

5- Promoting the use of ICT as a daily life tool among the local community

6- Providing the base for a Network of Knowledge Stations that are adopting the KS-Tourism project concepts

Overall Concept

This KS-Tourism Pilot Project is based on concepts that will make available services and products which would be providing an immediate answer to the National Tourism Strategy's plans to identify tourism products to be developed and offered to tourists. The conceptual design of the Pilot Project revolves around five closely-knit concepts.

Project Element 1   Knowledge Station Online Presence, Shop and Visitor Center, Tourism Training Centers Network

Project Element 2   Host Dinner Scheduling

Project Element 3   Open Kitchen and Cookbook

Project Element 4   Heritage Tour Maps and Trekking Trail Maps

Above project concepts can work in unison to support the sustainability of a Knowledge Station. All or standalone individual concepts can be implemented, yet the synergies and the impact are greater when all concepts are adopted in same Station.

Project Element One: Knowledge Station Online Presence, Physical and Shop and Visitor Center, Tourism Training Centers Network

This project entails the development of an online website for the Knowledge Station that acts as an online tourist information point as well as an online product and service offerings of the local community.

The National Tourism Strategy research stated that website development on the tourism market in Jordan is not good. This project concept responds to this fact as well as to other needs of the tourism sector exemplified in better promotion for tourism in Jordan and better informative displays and advertising of Jordan's tourist offerings. The KS website will provide a number of key services:

- Contact information and listings of the KS local area

- Information about the tourist offerings of the area

- Online window-shopping (display of products and prices) of locally made products such as handicrafts, foodstuffs etc. as well as the products produced by the KS through the previously-mentioned projects

- Booking and scheduling of tourism services

Another aspect of this project element entails the Knowledge Station acting as a **physical** shop, and a **visitor center** where information, and booking/scheduling service for the local services in town can be done over the desk.

The Knowledge Stations will not only act as an intermediary gateway between the local community and the tour agencies (and other potential business partners) but also position itself as the village/town visitor information center. In this regard, the Knowledge Stations are providing an important tourist facility hugely lacking in areas across Jordan. Such a facility will encourage tour agencies and tourists to visit areas previously lacking in basic services. The Knowledge Station will be the closest point of information to the heritage sites, providing all needed information and directions to basic services.

Furthermore, there is an urgent need for raising awareness in tourism and educating the people in the heritage and history of their area. As such, the Knowledge Stations will also be a network of base centers for training the locals in tourism ethics, expose them to tourism offerings in other countries world-wide

which may result in activating creative thinking and new products, and increase their knowledge of the history and heritage of their surrounding area as well as offer foreign language training. The service will use ICT and multimedia to develop training material, and the Stations facilities to deliver the course. Such a service may be in the form of a public Private Partnership with the Municipalities and Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities, carried out under a grant.

Project Element Two: Host Dinner Scheduling

In response to cultural tourism and the need to create opportunities for the tourist to interact with the Jordanians first hand, the Knowledge Station will directly offer tourists, or coordinate with tour agents, a host dinner scheduling service allowing visitors to dine with a family from among the local community. This service will provide tourists with a rich cultural experience allowing them to interact with individual Jordanians, including women and children, and experience family life and cuisine in the rural countryside of Jordan.

Project Element Three: Open Kitchen and Cookbook

The open kitchen service provides an immediate response to the need for more cultural-related tourist activities, while also facilitating community involvement and digital content building.

The concept of this project starts with encouraging the local community women in providing traditional recipes that they cook at home for their families. Each woman that provides a recipe to the KS will be reimbursed by free Internet surfing time for her or a member of her house or free IT related training session. The recipes will be linked to their provider who can have the chance to host tourists for a cooking session including a shopping trip for the ingredients.

The compilation of traditional recipes of the area will lead to the development of a cook book of the town/village (e.g. the Madaba Traditional Meals cookbook). The cookbook will be enhanced with photos contributed from the open kitchen sessions, as mentioned below. This product maybe produced in hardcopy or on CDROM to be sold to interested visitors.

Project Element Four: Heritage Tour Maps and Trekking Trail Maps

In response to digital content building and generating income for KS through tourism, maps will be developed which can guide the tourist through the town's streets and past its heritage buildings and monuments. The colloquial tale may be historical, a legend or a folk traditionally known story of each significant location (e.g. heritage house, statue, and archaeological site will be put on the map.

Based on its community outreach, the Knowledge Station has access to the persons most knowledgeable of the area and its heritage. Not-to-scale but clear maps can be sketched of the local routes of the town with the help of the local community with monuments and landmarks drawn on them. Stories of separate places and their oral history, as well as folk tales, may be gathered from senior citizens. Owners of heritage buildings may tell the story of their house, who occupied it, its role in the history of Jordan etc. Those stories will be printed on the map as well adjacent to its related monument/location.

This will generate a Story-Map product that provides a history of the local area and related to its places. The tourist uses the map during his walk around the town and enriches the experience from the tales s/he can read.

Potential Stakeholders

Following are the roles and responsibilities of the stakeholders whose involvement is perceived best to accomplish the project:

1. The National Information Technology Centre

Based on information obtained from the Director General of the Center, the NITC has various relevant experiences developed within its Project Management Unit. Currently this unit has 13 persons working as social developers, coordinators in the field, and researchers. The PMU could extend its capabilities to this project. Of those relevant and needed for the success of the project are:

- The NITC can draw up all agreement needed with the parties managing the Station (Public or NGO), and with external organizations such as the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities, the Department of Antiquities, etc.

- The ability to have permanent staff from the NITC/PMU assigned to the project to be its managing team. Those would take on the management of the project in the piloted Knowledge Stations and build the capacity in the community and the managing institution of the Station

- The ability to extend technical expertise in website development

- The ability to provide research material that has already been gathered of the various Knowledge Stations' communities

- The ability to access more than one Station at a time. This will provide a wider involvement of the communities clustered around nearby Knowledge Stations and consequently providing more of the needed information (e.g. more recipes, stories, etc.) than if one Station at a time was targeted.

- The ability to recruit, employ and manage volunteers or employees from the community who can perform the needed functions of the project in terms of community engagement, information collection and status validation of participants (please refer to the project concepts below)

- The NITC team can work closely with a private sector Tourism Expert to validate feasibility of gathered information, and applicability of participants and products in view of tourism appeal.

- The ability to help in delivering the needed tourism related training. The NITC team can work closely with a private sector company specialized in such training and ensure the training success.

- The NITC can set up arrangements with various NGO or other Institutions which could be managing the funds of this project or with the private sector organization responsible for the project.

2. The Knowledge Stations Director and Staff

The Director of the Station reports to the managing organization. The Director is the link between the NITC and the organization, and is responsible in front of the organization for the success of the project in terms of its financial sustainability and benefit to the community.

The Trainer at the Station cannot be involved in this project.

3. The Private Sector

Private sector involvement is needed to input the tourism perspective to the

project. Private sector would be responsible for the following:

- Provide tourism related consulting to project to oversee the selection and/or production of the project products, the selection of the participants, appealing promotional tools, etc. (please refer to project concepts below)

- To provide tourism related training know-how and training material, deliver such training, and build capacity as in training of trainers from within the community.

- Provide the link and contacts with the tour agents and other involved external organizations, as well as all needed operations to ensure the best promotion of the project.

- Coordinate with NITC on the proper management of the project and ensure it remains on track through project management, deliverables, and meeting of deadlines and objectives.

- The private sector company could act as the financier of the project and may coordinate with NITC all payments needed.

Of the external organizations that may also play a role in the project are: The community based organization around the Knowledge Station, The Ministry of Planning, The Ministry of ICT The Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities - Tourism Visitors Centers.

Considering all issues and conditions required for the Knowledge Station to have in order to provide the tourist with its offerings; the delivery location of service and/or product display made available by the KS-Tourism Pilot Project could be done either:

a) Onsite i.e. Knowledge Station premises or

b) Offsite in other nearby locations such as the Visitors Center in Madaba, or within the Karak Castle Piazza, or within the Ajloun Castle itself.

To ensure a successful Pilot Project which will provide future incentive for replication in other sites, the location of the Knowledge Station is a detrimental factor. The Station's location is represented by

– the geographical position on the tourist routes

– by the readiness and responsiveness of the local community in the place.

– By being nearby to other Stations and so considered as a cluster. This will widen the base of community outreach and enrich the information and products presented.

Based on the above, four clustered locations are recommended: Madaba, Mleih and Bani Hamida Stations, Ajloun and Anjara Stations, Karak and Rabbah Stations, and Salt.

But the site that has the highest success probability for all of the project concepts is perceived to be the Madaba Cluster Work Stations as mentioned below.

Promotional Actions

As previously mentioned the success of the KS-Tourism Program depends on the quality and attractiveness of the offered services and products and their

marketing and promotional campaigns. Several promotional actions should be undertaken in parallel which should start as soon as the implementation of the Project starts.

The appeal of the services and products extended through the KS-Tourism Program will pull different types of visitors, ranging from small groups, individual travelers, larger groups and Jordanian visitors. It is important to promote the proposed Knowledge Station services and products to these target groups, but more importantly the Knowledge Station should develop close relationship with tour operators and other related agencies in order to attain the widest reach possible.

Following are some of the promotional concepts that are in tune with the pilot project:

Online Promotional Tools
The First concept, the Knowledge Station website, is the promotional driver of the project. The online presence of the KS will promote the station's services and products as well as the city and surrounding area of the Station, directly to the global and local tourism operators and to the international and Jordanian tourists themselves.

The KS website will be promoted through links from other national tourism sites such as the Knowledge Station Portal, JTB, MOTA, JITOA, JSTA, Hotelier Associations, Google, etc. and through Jordanian Hotels Touchpad Kiosks (when they become operational)

The website should also be promoted at tourism-related trade shows and conferences, and brochures at hotel rooms, the airport and other visitor locations with the aim of reaching businesspeople, journalists, transit visitors, tour agents, Jordanian visitors, individual tourist etc. who should all be made aware of these services.

Physical Promotional Tools
Promotional Flyers and Brochures describing the Knowledge Station, the services, and the products should be professionally developed. Those will be distributed to tour agents, and for them to re-distribute with their tour packages and other promotional media. Flyers and brochures should be available at hotels and hotel rooms, as well as various restaurants and visitor centers.

Another promotional link is through serving locally made sweets made by the women at front reception desks of hotels for tourists to sample. A nearby message of where to learn how to cook and prepare them will be placed pointing to the Knowledge Station website and location.

Promotion among Tour Agents and Others
In general the proposed Knowledge Station services and products target the tour agencies and tour operators through which the Knowledge Station can promote its services to potential tourists. As such direct promotion to those agencies in Amman is a must. Knowledge Station services and products should also be promoted through environmental organizations such as Friends of the Environment (FoE), the Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature (RSCN), who are involved in eco- and adventure tourism. Also, among the various archaeological institutions in Jordan (e.g. ACOR), as well as Embassies and UN agencies.

Community Aid and Community Branding Promotion
Promotional tools should aim at branding the city and community whereby the service/product will provide the village/town with a unique reputation

corresponding to its service. It is also important to stress the concept of helping the community as the key objective of this initiative. By promoting this concept as a service to the community, it gives potential visitors and customers more incentive to visit Knowledge Station locations and use their services. Community has to be the main beneficiary and the driver of the service. Tourists will spend more once they know that they are contributing to the development of the local community, and will be happier in the interaction with the local culture and people.

In addition, it is important to highlight that the Knowledge Stations also work toward the celebration and preservation of local cultural heritage and tradition through their services. This aspect will again attract tourists seeking a cultural experience and also highlight the community development involvement in the initiative.

Attractiveness and Appeal
Attractiveness and appeal is a major thing. The Knowledge Stations must be attractive in design and content in order to attract appeal from both tour agencies dealing with them and tourists, both local and foreign. Products such as DVDs must be excellent in both presentation quality and CD quality. The website, brochures and other material must also be attractive in design and content. The Station must also be attractive physically and must have a helpful and friendly environment as it will be the direct contact point between tourists and the services and products.

Recommended Pilot Project Location - Madaba

Context of Madaba:

The people of Madaba are very hospitable, creative in their tourist offerings, and educated. The families of Madaba have been exposed to tourism and are more adept at it and are receptive to hosting tourists at their homes. They have special traditional dishes specific to Madaba. Foreign language knowledge is prevalent among Madaba residents which will make it easier to recruit participants in the program.

The Madaba CBOs are already involved in traditional kitchen activities and are willing to cooperate in tourism projects. The Madaba Heritage Society is one NGO that has already gathered heritage documents, stories and photos but are not in digital format. There are several ready materials for inclusion in the project concepts described above.

Madaba is already an attraction to tourists because of its heritage and archaeological places. It has a wealth of architectural heritage and an already developed routing where visitors can go around the city from one location to another.

Madaba is also one of the cities included in the Third Tourism Development Project in Jordan and as such more attention is coming its way making its KS more prone to success than others. It is also on the route of all organized tours and also a frequent destination for the individual travelers as well as Jordanian families.

Although tour coaches do not stay long in Madaba - on average 1-1.5 hours, Madaba is within close proximity to Amman, only a 45-minute drive away. As such, tour agents will find it convenient to shuttle tourists for an evening dinner or luncheon. Also, tour agents include Madaba on the itinerary for specially arranged tour packages for the higher income tourist. These tourists are more

likely to stay overnight in Madaba.

Project Delivery:

Although the Knowledge Station at Madaba is not an ideal place for tourist visit, being located on the second floor of the building, yet it can provide its services:

1- Onsite: to visitors acting as a walk-in booking service, especially given that its website will promote its various services online, and act as the link between Local community offerings and the tourist and tour agents.

2- Offsite: to tourist and visitors by displaying the local products and providing its multimedia services at the currently under-utilized Visitor Center of Madaba.

Implementation Plan and estimated Budget

The main detrimental factor in planning the implementation of the Pilot Project is the seasonality of tourism in Jordan. The second tourism season starts in September and continues through November. To benefit from this the Pilot Project should start at the latest by April and should be up and running by August. This in turn necessitates that all of the five project concepts should be developed in parallel.

In summary, the set up an launch of the program should be finalized by April. Directly the projects should be started with community outreach, collection of information from the local community, and building participation.

Promotional campaign should be triggered by June with brochures and flyers finalized by May. All projects should be ready for launch by August.

A total of US$ 68,000 is estimated for the set up and running of the complete project concepts, not taking into consideration that NITC may be playing a role as mentioned above.

Following is the perceived Implementation Timeline for the Pilot Project:

Action		2005									2006		
		Apr.	May	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.
Program Set Up & Launch		██											
Promotional Physical Activities	Flyers and Brochure Development - ready for distribution			██									
Promotional Physical Activities	Promotional campaign			░░	░░	░░	░░	░░	░░	░░	░░	░░	░░
Project Element 1	Knowledge Station Online Presence – Online information point and shop	██	██	██	██								
	Knowledge Station as Physical Shop and Visitor Center		▒▒	▒▒	▒▒	▒▒							
	Knowledge Station										██	██	██

	as Tourism Training Center												
Project Element 2	Host Dinner Scheduling												
Project Element 3	Open Kitchen												
	Cookbook												
Project Element 4	Heritage Tour Maps and Trekking Trail Maps												
	Maps production												

1. Background and Introduction

According to the World Tourism Organization (WTO), tourism benefits local economies substantially by increasing foreign exchange earnings, creating employment and investment opportunities, increasing government revenues, developing a countries image and supporting all sectors of the economy as well as local communities.

Tourism is an important sector to the economy of Jordan. It is the largest export sector, second largest private sector employer and second highest producer of foreign exchange. In 2003 tourism has contributed to more than JD 577.5 million to Jordan's economy and has been the source of employment for more than of 21,000 people. The industry also serves to indirectly create employment via construction, retail, food, transportation and industrial sectors. Given the considerable importance of tourism to the Jordanian economy, it is recognized that every effort should be made to develop and optimize this sector. [1]

ICT is another sector that is also aiming to be a major contributor to the economy as well as the tool that accelerate Jordan's progress towards a knowledge economy. ICT therefore has to be part of the daily life of Jordanians offering the digital content that enriches their life, provides long life learning, and includes all sectors of the Jordanian community irrelevant of their income level.

Despite the importance of both industries to the economy, their current status is not very encouraging. On one hand the tourism sector is underperforming far below its potential and as a consequence its competitiveness with regional countries is under threat. Currently nine of the WTO list of top 30 emerging destination countries are in the MENA region. These countries have enjoyed exceptional double-digit levels of growth up to and including the year 2000. All of them are Arabic countries – but Jordan is not amongst them. On the other hand, the ICT industry still lacks the relevant digital content, the prevalence of Internet use among Jordanians, and the skills to use ICT as a daily life tool.

In terms of future outlooks, high governmental as well as private sector investments are and will be employed in both sectors. Within the next five years more than US$ 30 million will be invested in the revitalization of five secondary cities in Jordan, Ajloun, Salt, Karak, Jarash and Madaba under the Third Tourism Development Project for Jordan. In ICT the Ministry of ICT as well as the private sector are utilizing all expertise to widen the ICT skill base in schools through e-curriculums, at universities through broad band networking and at local communities through outreach programs such as Knowledge Stations, NetCorp, JADEER, UNIFEM-Cisco's e-Village at Lib/Madaba and others.

With these tourism market considerations and national objectives in mind, this study responds to the SOW and :

- Explores the synergies between the National Tourism Strategy and the objectives of the KS- Tourism Program;
- Proposes ICT-tourism related project concepts that can be provided by the KS
- Validates the project concepts by the experiences and aspirations of the tourism experts and Jordanian tour agencies as well as by key involved stakeholders
- Proposes design of a pilot project

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[1] Estimates of Central bank of Jordan and Statistics from Ministry of Tourism

The validation of project concepts included eight face-to-face meetings and one phone interview with major tour agencies in Amman. The purpose of the meetings was to introduce the Knowledge Stations and the concept of KS-Tourism Program for providing tourism services and products by incorporating ICT leading to the sustenance of the Station. The meetings explored opportunities to attract tourists to KS locations and validated the tourist needs and requirements of the agency to use the services of the Station.

2. Foundation of the KS-Tourism Pilot Project Concept

2.1.   Pilot Project Concept in View of the National Tourism Strategy

The long term objective of the tourism sector in Jordan is to double the tourism economy by the year 2010. The Jordan's National Tourism Strategy 2004 – 2010, outlines the methodology to achieve this in four pillars:

- Pillar 1, Strengthen Tourism Marketing;
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Moreover, the program is affiliated with three out of the 12 tourism segments[2] that the Strategy is targeting. Those are the cultural heritage/living culture, eco-tourism, and adventure tourism segments. Acting as a public private partnership it adopts project concepts that tackle one or more of those niches and concentrate, for each potential tourism segment, on the points that the Strategy noted as main actions for Jordan to focus on, namely:

- attracting high yield visitors,
- increasing their average length of stay,
- developing new and niche products,
- enhancing the visitors' experience,
- mounting international marketing

In addition, the National Tourism Strategy identified many issues that contribute to a low visitor value, one of the threats to Jordan's tourism. Jordan's visitor value is currently around $474 in Jordan compared to a Middle East average of $521 and a world average of $670, and specifically to Lebanon's standing at $1,000 and Egypt's of $872. Some of those issues are short length of stay, low visitor expenditure, lack of information on product range and diversity, and site

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[2] The National Tourism Strategy is targeting 12 tourism segments, which it identifies as priority niche markets that are semi-ready but require further enhancement and development. They are: Cultural heritage (archaeology) , Religion, Eco-tourism, Health and wellness, Adventure, Meetings, incentives, conferences and events (MICE), Cruising, Scientific, academic, volunteer and educational (SAVE), Filming and photography, Festivals and cultural events, Summer and family holidays, Sports

presentation that induces shorter visits through organization that does not respond to the needs of visitors and create higher levels of visitor experience. Those issues affect all tourism segments.
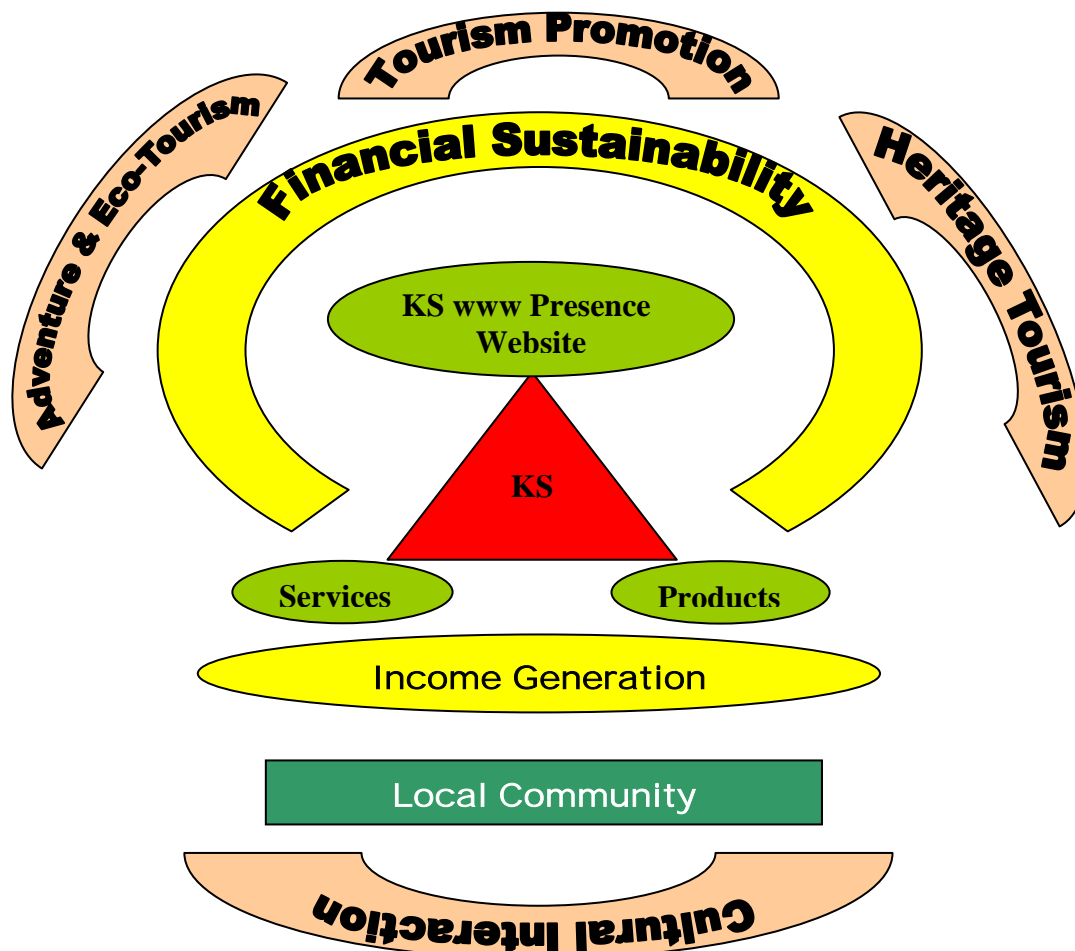
2.1.1. Living Culture, Adventure and Eco- Tourism

While Jordan can competitively bring many products to the market place, one comparative advantage stands potentially dominant overall – the iconic nature of its major heritage and natural landscape products that have already established strong images and are potential motivators for key growth segments. These are: The Dead Sea, Petra, Wadi Rum, and The Holy Land – Religious Clusters: Biblical, Christian, and Muslim. Yet, almost all, and especially in Petra, continue to operate below optimal levels of presentation and integration with the local community due to the lack of tourist offerings beyond the tourists monuments.

An important observation drawn from the National Tourism Strategy and validated by the various meetings conducted with tour agencies in Amman is the need for more cultural-related tourist activities. Visitors no more appreciate visiting a deserted, unfriendly sites, rather they need to experience the historical place "as it was" and be able to interact with the local culture. Thus the importance of offering a cluster of varied tourist services and products, and the identification of tourist trails that will lead visitors to go beyond the existing limited

attractions and thus extends their stay in the area.

To experience local culture is the most sought after concept in all of the service offerings in Jordan. This cultural exchange, which is lacking enormously, is what the tourist seeks. Interacting with the local community, discovering the life of the Jordanian women, meeting the local community at tourist destinations and getting to know the local culture, traditions and customs are issues that will enhance the visitors experience and add value to the tourist service, increase the length of stay, and spending.

The National Tourism Strategy also calls for adventure and eco-tourism. Jordan is rich with its varying natural landscapes and many tour programs are relying on adventure and endurance activities, such as walking, trekking, camping/ etc. and so the need for trails to be created exists. To encourage tourists and Jordanians to go on walking tours or adventure treks across the country, exciting trails that are better known to the local community, as well as directional and informative maps are in demand. Professionally trained guides are sought after to lead such trails.

The project concepts of the KS-Tourism Program have built on the Knowledge Station's community outreach, as described in the next section. The Program would also help in realizing the common needs of tour agencies across Jordan. Such as the need for new tourist products and offerings that will add to the quality of their service, help in locating expertise from local communities, and arranging of events that will enrich their tour programs.

2.1.2.   Supporting Local Development, Distribution of Income, and Sustainability of KS

The Strategy has identified benefits that tourism will bring to Jordan on a national scale. Some of those the KS-Tourism Program can potentially realize. In particular, it will help in supporting local development, and distribution of income and opportunity.

Income Generation and KS Sustainability
A key feature of the KS–Tourism Program is the importance of community. The Knowledge Stations will seek the community's involvement in developing local products and services. Through the development and provision of local services, the Knowledge Station will encourage income-generating means to the community either by attracting tourist spending in the area or through selling locally produced products and tourist services promoted through the Knowledge Station.

The project concepts of the KS-Tourism program aim to develop new tourism products that will combine the cultural and traditional aspect of the community with tourism. ICT will help in facilitating the sale of the service or product, its promotion, as well as its scheduled offering. Income generated from the product/service offering will be distributed to the community and the Knowledge station.

As such, community outreach is an essential component of the KS–Tourism Program. The Program aims to derive its services from the local community, and to give back to the community, by introducing new concepts to the Knowledge Station that will help in income generation for community; extend ICT as a daily life tool to community; and above all help in financially sustaining the Knowledge Station.

Local Products Development

There is a need for locally produced and handmade products (vs. the 'Arabic' products such as coffee cups that are 'Made in China') to be on display to the visitor. Inexpensive locally made handicrafts that the tourist can buy on the spot knowing full well that the proceeds are going back to the community and help raise their income. **This very important point is the main incentive, for Jordanian as well as international visitors, to buy the locally made products.**

Such cultural and traditional products/services will help in branding the town/village while ICT will help in bringing the tourism product closer to the Jordanian citizens, the tour agent, and the international tourist. They will also break the reliance on traditional and inherited monumental attraction in the concerned locations, by providing the needed sustenance mechanism, namely, enhancing the visitor experience, and introducing the novel product development that adds to the impact of the inherited attraction.

Tourism Awareness

Awareness raising and training in tourism is another aspect that is a major issue in Jordan. It is important to educate the local community on how to deal with tourists, locals must be prepared for the different cultures and tourist behavior they will be exposed to in their village/town, and so must be trained on tourism ethics based on the hospitality and warmth that Jordan is renowned for. Training will add to their knowledge of the history and heritage of their area allowing them to take pride of what they have and giving them the tools to convey it through proper inter-cultural exchange.

2.1.3. Supporting Better Communication and Promotion of Jordan Tourism Offerings

The KS-Tourism program and especially through ICT and the Internet, will alleviate the identified threat of poor communication by facilitating the messages needed for better tourist pull, particularly in conveying to its potential customers, the reality that Jordan is a safe and welcoming country for its visitors. The online presence of any country is essential in today's world. The KS- Tourism Program responds specifically to this weakness of Jordan's tourism through building content, utilizing ICT in better marketing and dissemination of information on products and tourist offerings, offering interesting multi-media presentation of sites, cultural exchange products to buy and experiences to have, all serving in lengthening the stay of the tourist at the location and offering a more quality cultural exchange with the local community.

2.2. Pilot Project Concept in View of the National ICT Strategy

The five main aspects that are under consideration within the pilot project concept are:

7- The building of digital content of the local community

8- The use of tourism in ensuring the sustainability of the Knowledge Stations-the main ICT community outreach initiative

9- Using Internet to bridge the gap between rural communities across the country and the rest of urban Jordan

10- The use of ICT in promoting Jordan's culture and tourism by means of the internet as well as communication media, exposing Jordanian villages to various foreign and local cultures

11- Promoting the use of ICT as a daily life tool among the local community

12- Providing the base for a Network of Knowledge Stations that are adopting the KS-Tourism project concepts

Above points are in direct compliance with the National Tourism Strategy and ICT strategy of Jordan. In fact, each project concept presented under this pilot project for KS-Tourism program tackle two or more of those points.

The KS-Tourism Program will enhance and make use of the ICT skills of the local communities whenever possible in designing and developing promotional products, website content management as well as design. It will propagate the use of Internet facilities for online display of products and services, exchanging emails, and providing a presence of the town/village on the Web.

Free hours of Internet surfing or IT-related training session may be granted to community member in return for provided service or digital content. This way encourages participation and IT use.

Digital content building will be encouraged through participation of community in creating tourism related products that will serve in generating income to the family. Digital content will reflect the heritage of the area, its culture, traditional products, and folktales and will ultimately help in branding the town/village especially when promoted on the web. The JADEER program, a digital content building pilot project carried out by MoICT in cooperation with the Lib e-Village in Madaba Governorate, may provide lessons learnt and the seed for similar projects.

Promoting of a KS's tourism program would be through creating a web presence for the Station and the provision of links to it from national tourism related websites and the Knowledge Station Portal (currently under development), as well as Hotel Touchpad Kiosks (when they become operational, etc. as mentioned later on.

2.3.   Pilot Project Considerations

Following are some issues that the Pilot Project should take into consideration and properly tackle during implementation:

Issue 1:

The adoption of new tourist trails leading to new destinations is conditional to the existing tourist facilities at the destination area such as full-service rest houses, including bathrooms, and drinking water.[3]

The Knowledge Station has to meet certain requirements in order for tour agents to consider using its facilities and detouring to its location. The most important are:

- *Location of the Station* to be in the center of town the tour is passing through. It should be in a street accessible to tourists, near to parking locations and within walking distance. It must be emphasized that Stations must be easily accessible

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[3] This point has also been validated by several tour agencies interviewed for that purpose. All argued that new trails should be created in Jordan yet those should feature all needed tourist facilities and rest points for them to use them in their tour programs

to tourists and therefore location is everything.

The Station to be visited should preferably be within a separate building and a clean presentable environment. And definitely it should be on the Ground floor walk-in level.

- Furthermore, considered Knowledge Stations should be in villages/towns that are along the typical tourist routes (see Annex A), which they could fit into the tourists itinerary. Creating *new routes* to Knowledge Stations require two major issues:

1- The existence of tourist facilities (e.g. toilets) at the location that are always clean
2- The existence of a major **developed** tourist attraction near or at the Knowledge Station that is viewed as worthwhile for the tourist to spend their vacation time vs. feeling of wasting it.

Issue 2:

Tour agencies and tourists need to be assured of the level of service and quality extended by the Knowledge Stations before considering sending their tourists to these locations. Locals considered for service provisions (such as the host dinner, the tea house or as local guides) must be trained and certified where necessary.

Issue 3:

When the supply of tourist offerings exist in convenient places, the tourist will come and tour agents will make use of offered service. Yet, the current case is that the concept of "product development" as a mean of tourist pull and enhancing the visitors experience is still not prevalent in Jordan. New services and products are badly needed to enrich the tourist program in Jordan, providing them with more activities and a culturally enriching experience on the whole.

Availability of quality services will be incentives, on their own, for tourists to come to the area and for tour agents to send them there. Moreover, the need for tourist activities after the sites closing hours and when tourists are left to spend the evening alone at the hotel must be emphasized. This also affects the opening hours of the Knowledge Stations.

Around 35-40% of tourists visiting Jordan are usually small groups on trips that are tailor-made or customized. Those are the highest-yield tourists that should be targeted in this KS-Tourism Program. The other type are the coach tours, including 18-20 persons, who visit Jordan also on tours that need to be customized as well for each group's journey around Jordan.

Above indicates that once the KS-Tourism Program succeeds in developing quality service and in their promotion, tour agents will include the services in their itinerary since they are almost always customized either by the Jordanian agency or the International agency.

Issue 4:

One element to consider is that post arrival services, trip programming, and travel arrangements are handled by the tour agent. The implementation of the tour program is mainly carried out by the Guide and the coach driver; as such, and in some cases, the agency has no control over the tourist while touring Jordan. The Guide is in full control where the coach stops and who the tourist gets to see. KS-Tourism Program must take this fact into consideration in its offerings.

Issue 5:

The KS-Tourism Program already has support from the NITC and the MOICT. Both will facilitate any MOUs needed between the Knowledge Station and other Stakeholders such as the Municipality, the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities as operators of the Visitors Centers and custodians of the archaeological sites, and the Ministry of Planning, which may be a source of funding as well.

3. The Pilot Project

3.1. Conceptual Pilot Project Design

This KS-Tourism Pilot Project is based on concepts that will make available services and products which would be providing an immediate answer to the National Tourism Strategy's plans to identify tourism products to be developed and offered to tourists.   The conceptual design of the Pilot Project revolves around four closely-knit concepts. These are:

|	
Project Element 1	Knowledge Station Online Presence, Shop and Visitor Center, Tourism Training Centers Network
Project Element 2	Host Dinner Scheduling
Project Element 3	Open Kitchen and Cookbook
Project Element 4	Heritage Tour Maps and Trekking Trail Maps

Above project elements can work in unison to support the sustainability of a Knowledge Station. All or standalone individual concepts can be implemented, yet the synergies and the impact are greater when all concepts are adopted in same Station.

The concepts above were developed and validated through discussions with tour agencies in Jordan. The majority of the nine interviewed tour agencies were enthusiastic about them stating that there is a growing demand from their tourists for cultural experiences during their stay in Jordan. As such, the concepts that involve direct contact with locals received the most enthusiasm. The tour agencies major concern was not what the service offerings entailed, but rather their quality.

In addition, tour agents were welcoming of Knowledge Stations providing alternative services and products to tourists. They noted that such an initiative would help the tourism sector by encouraging visitors to Jordan; increasing their length of stay; increasing their spending; and overall providing an enriched holiday experience with added-value services currently lacking. Yet for the program to succeed Location and Quality of service and surroundings is of the utmost importance.

The following schematic shows the integration of the project concepts and how they interact with the local community and tourism sector.

Details of the project Concepts are in the following sections.
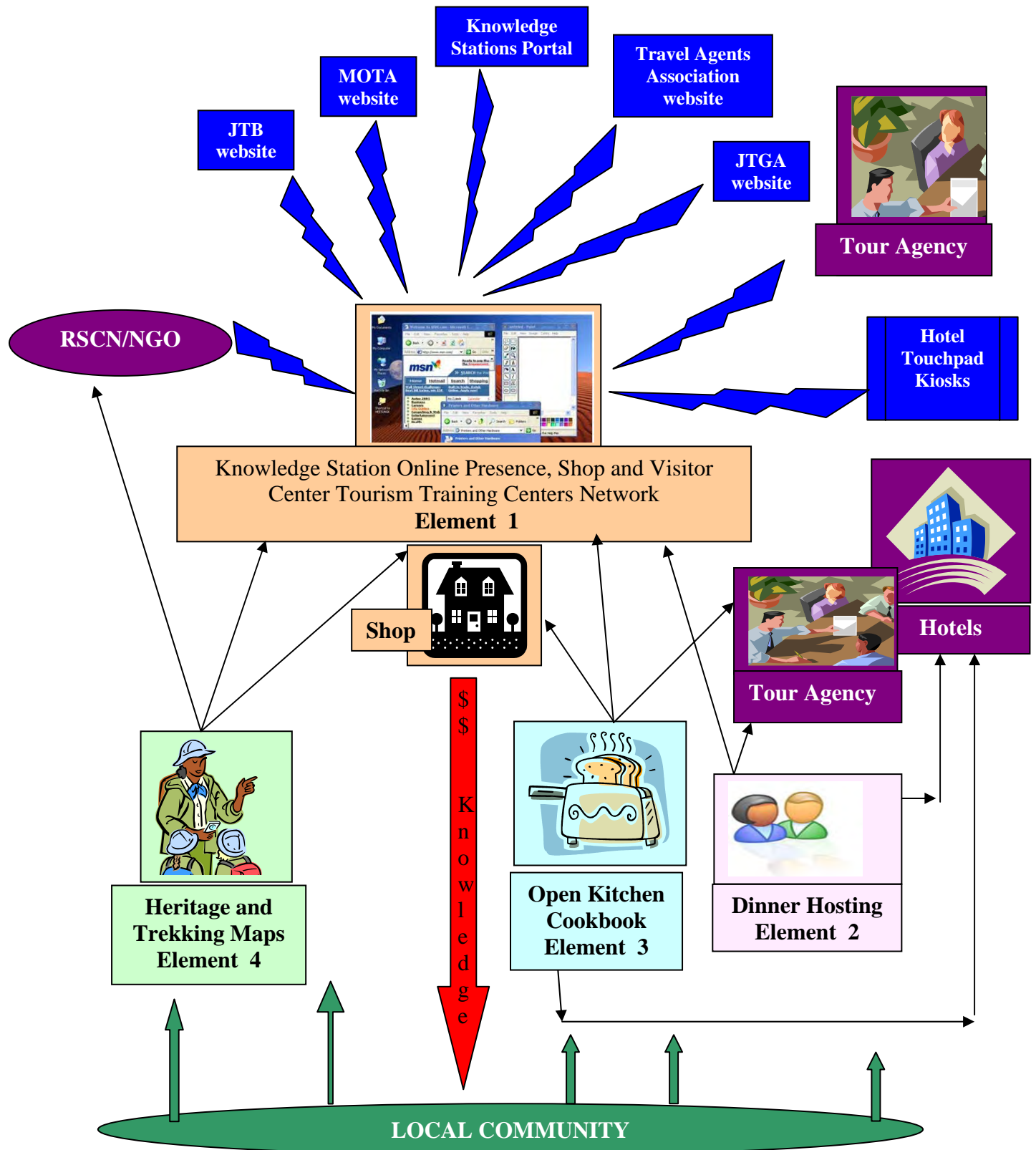
3.1.1.   Potential Stakeholders, Roles and Responsibilities

The National Information Technology Centre is the party responsible for establishing the Knowledge Stations all over Jordan. It furnishes the station with all necessary equipment, computers, and furniture, as well as recruiting a salaried Trainer to manage technical issues and provide training courses to the community. The NITC then draws up an agreement with either an NGO or a Community Based Organization or a public institution such as the Municipality to manage the Station with all financial proceeds going to this organization.

As such the organization managing the Knowledge Station and the NITC play a major role in the success of this project. In fact, heavy reliance on the Knowledge Station's community outreach is a must. Yet, the NITC lacks the Tourism perspective of the project. This has to be provided from private sector participation.

Following are the roles and responsibilities of the stakeholders whose involvement is perceived best to accomplish the project:

1. The National Information Technology Centre

Based on information obtained from the Director General of the Center, the NITC has various relevant experiences developed within its Project Management Unit. Currently this unit has 13 persons working as social developers, coordinators in the field, and researchers. The PMU could extend its capabilities to this project. Of those relevant and needed for the success of the project are:

- The NITC can draw up all agreement needed with the parties managing the Station (Public or NGO), and with external organizations such as the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities, the Department of Antiquities, etc.

- The ability to have permanent staff from the NITC/PMU assigned to the project to be its managing team. Those would take on the management of the project in the piloted Knowledge Stations and build the capacity in the community and the managing institution of the Station

- The ability to extend technical expertise in website development

- The ability to provide research material that has already been gathered of the various Knowledge Stations' communities

- The ability to access more than one Station at a time. This will provide a wider involvement of the communities clustered around nearby Knowledge Stations and consequently providing more of the needed information (e.g. more recipes, stories, etc.) than if one Station at a time was targeted.

- The ability to recruit, employ and manage volunteers or employees from the community who can perform the needed functions of the project in terms of community engagement, information collection and status validation of participants (please refer to the project concepts below)

- The NITC team can work closely with a private sector Tourism Expert to validate feasibility of gathered information, and applicability of participants and products in view of tourism appeal.

- The ability to help in delivering the needed tourism related training. The NITC team can work closely with a private sector company specialized in such training and ensure the training success.

- The NITC can set up arrangements with various NGO or other Institutions which could be managing the funds of this project or with the private sector organization responsible for the project.

2. The Knowledge Stations Director and Staff

The Director of the Station reports to the managing organization. The Director is the link between the NITC and the organization, and is responsible in front of the organization for the success of the project in terms of its financial sustainability and benefit to the community.

The Trainer at the Station cannot be involved in this project.

3. The Private Sector

Private sector involvement is needed to input the tourism perspective to the project. Private sector would be responsible for the following:

- Provide tourism related consulting to project to oversee the selection and/or production of the project products, the selection of the participants, appealing promotional tools, etc. (please refer to project concepts below)

- To provide tourism related training know-how and training material, deliver such training, and build capacity as in training of trainers from within the community.

- Provide the link and contacts with the tour agents and other involved external organizations, as well as all needed operations to ensure the best promotion of the project.

- Coordinate with NITC on the proper management of the project and ensure it remains on track through project management, deliverables, and meeting of deadlines and objectives.

- The private sector company could act as the financier of the project and may coordinate with NITC all payments needed.

Of the external organizations that may also play a role in the project are:

Potential Stakeholders/Implementing Partners	Involvement
The community based organization around the Knowledge Station	May provide their services in implementing the project concepts (especially the Open Kitchen and Cookbook)
The Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities - The Tourism Visitors Centers	May provide grants for the development of and its facilities near the tourist sites
The Ministry of Planning	May be a source of external funding and may help in implementation through the IRADA / EPP project
The Ministry of ICT	May act as a liaison with other governmental agencies and may be a source of external funding

3.1.2. Delivery of Service Location

Considering all above-mentioned issues and conditions required for the Knowledge Station to have in order to provide the tourist with its offerings; the delivery location of service and/or product display made available by the KS-Tourism Pilot Project could be done either:

a) Onsite i.e. Knowledge Station premises or

b) Offsite in other nearby locations such as the Visitors Center in Madaba, or within the Karak Castle Piazza, or within the Ajloun Castle itself.

To ensure a successful Pilot Project which will provide future incentive for replication in other sites, the location of the Knowledge Station is a detrimental factor. The Station's location is represented by

- the geographical position on the tourist routes

- by the readiness and responsiveness of the local community in the place.

- By being nearby to other Stations and so considered as a cluster. This will widen the base of community outreach and enrich the information and products presented.

Based on the above, four clustered locations are recommended: Madaba, Mleih and Bani Hamida Stations, Ajloun and Anjara Stations, Karak and Rabbah Stations, and Salt.

But the site that has the highest success probability for all of the project concepts is perceived to be the Madaba Cluster Work Stations as mentioned below.

3.2. Promotional Actions

As previously mentioned the success of the KS-Tourism Program depends on the quality and attractiveness of the offered services and products and their marketing and promotional campaigns. Several promotional actions should be undertaken in parallel which should start as soon as the implementation of the Project starts.

The appeal of the services and products extended through the KS-Tourism Program will pull different types of visitors, ranging from small groups, individual travelers, larger groups and Jordanian visitors. It is important to promote the proposed Knowledge Station services and products to these target groups, but more importantly the Knowledge Station should develop close relationship with tour operators and other related agencies in order to attain the widest reach possible.

Following are some of the promotional concepts that are in tune with the pilot project:

Online Promotional Tools

The First concept, the Knowledge Station website, is the promotional driver of the project. Already Knowledge Stations are developing their own websites, and this project will just take it a step further and enhance its offerings. The online presence of the KS will promote the station's services and products as well as the city and surrounding area of the Station, directly to the global and local tourism operators and to the international and Jordanian tourists themselves.

The KS website will be promoted through links from other national tourism sites such as the Knowledge Station Portal, JTB, MOTA, JITOA, JSTA, Hotelier Associations, Google, etc. and through Jordanian Hotels Touchpad Kiosks (when they become operational)

The website should also be promoted at tourism-related trade shows and conferences, and brochures at hotel rooms, the airport and other visitor locations with the aim of reaching businesspeople, journalists, transit visitors, tour agents, Jordanian visitors, individual tourist etc. who should all be made aware of these services.

The Knowledge Station Online presence is detailed under the Project Concept 1 description.

Physical Promotional Tools

Promotional Flyers and Brochures describing the Knowledge Station, the services, and the products should be professionally developed. Those will be distributed to tour agents, and for them to re-distribute with their tour packages and other promotional media.

Flyers and brochures should be available at hotels and hotel rooms, as well as various restaurants and visitor centers.

Necessary signage for services should also be available to uphold the legitimacy and accountability of the Knowledge Stations and their available services.

Another promotional link is through serving locally made sweets made by the women at front reception desks of hotels for tourists to sample. A nearby message of where to learn how to cook and prepare them will be placed pointing to the Knowledge Station website and location.

Promotion among Tour Agents and Others

In general the proposed Knowledge Station services and products target the tour agencies and tour operators through which the Knowledge Station can promote its services to potential tourists. As such direct promotion to those agencies in Amman is a must. Another possibility is the conduction of a trade show or exhibition showcasing the Knowledge Station's services and products. This would provide tour agencies and other potential clients with a chance to evaluate these services and assure them of their quality.

Knowledge Station services and products should also be promoted through environmental organizations such as Friends of the Environment (FoE), the Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature (RSCN), who are involved in eco- and adventure tourism. Also, among the various archaeological institutions in Jordan (e.g. ACOR), as well as Embassies and UN agencies.

Community Aid and Community Branding Promotion

Promotional tools should aim at branding the city and community whereby the service/product will provide the village/town with a unique reputation corresponding to its service.

It is also important to stress the concept of helping the community as the key objective of this initiative. By promoting this concept as a service to the community, it gives potential visitors and customers more incentive to visit Knowledge Station locations and use their services. Community has to be the main beneficiary and the driver of the service. Tourists will spend more once they know that they are contributing to the development of the local community, and will be happier in the interaction with the local culture and people.

The sales and marketing campaign should highlight the following causes:

⇒ *Proceeds go back to the local community*

⇒ *Strong community involvement with the Knowledge Station*

> ⇒ *Focus on celebrating and encouraging cultural heritage*

In addition, it is important to highlight that the Knowledge Stations also work toward the celebration and preservation of local cultural heritage and tradition through their services. This aspect will again attract tourists seeking a cultural experience and also highlight the community development involvement in the initiative.

Attractiveness and Appeal

Attractiveness and appeal is a major thing. The Knowledge Stations must be attractive in design and content in order to attract appeal from both tour agencies dealing with them and tourists, both local and foreign. Products such as DVDs must be excellent in both presentation quality and CD quality. The website, brochures and other material must also be attractive in design and content. The Station must also be attractive physically and must have a helpful and friendly environment as it will be the direct contact point between tourists and the services and products.

3.3. Recommended Pilot Project Location - Madaba Cluster [4]

Context of Madaba:

The people of Madaba are very hospitable, creative in their tourist offerings, and educated. The families of Madaba have been exposed to tourism and are more adept at it and are receptive to hosting tourists at their homes. They have special traditional dishes specific to Madaba. Foreign language knowledge is prevalent among Madaba residents which will make it easier to recruit participants in the program.

The Madaba CBOs are already involved in traditional kitchen activities and are willing to cooperate in tourism projects. The Madaba Heritage Society is one NGO that has already gathered heritage documents, stories and photos but are not in digital format. There are several ready materials for inclusion in the project concepts described above.

Madaba is already an attraction to tourists because of its heritage and archaeological places. It has a wealth of architectural heritage and an already developed routing where visitors can go around the city from one location to another.

Madaba is also one of the cities included in the Third Tourism Development Project in Jordan and as such more attention is coming its way making its KS more prone to success than others. It is also on the route of all organized tours and also a frequent destination for the individual travelers as well as Jordanian families.

Although tour coaches do not stay long in Madaba - on average 1-1.5 hours, Madaba is within close proximity to Amman, only a 45-minute drive away. As such, tour agents will find it convenient to shuttle tourists for an evening dinner or luncheon. Also, tour agents include Madaba on the itinerary for specially arranged tour packages for the higher income tourist. These tourists are more likely to stay overnight in Madaba.

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[4] Socio economic profiling of Madaba, November 2004, World Bank Jordan's Third Tourism Project/ Secondary Cities Revitalization Project, CDG.

Project Delivery:

The Knowledge Stations may not be the ideal place for tourist visit (e.g. Madaba Station being located on the second floor of the building), yet they can provide their services:

1- Onsite: to visitors acting as a walk-in booking service, especially given that each Station's website will promote its various services online, and act as the link between the Local community offerings and the tourist and tour agents.

2- Offsite: to tourist and visitors by displaying the local products and providing its multimedia services at the currently under-utilized Visitor Center of Madaba.

Estimated revenue for Madaba KS (as an example)

In 2003, around 39,000 multinational visitors (excluding Jordanians) came to Madaba. Around 2,700 tourists stayed overnight in Madaba during 2003. Foreign tourists tended to stay 1- 2 nights on average in Madaba.

Based only on this overnight visitor statistic, and considering only 40% of overnight tourists to be interested in the host dinner service, this alone will generate an average income of JD4,000 for the knowledge station.

If only 5% of international tourist coming to Madaba are to be interested in the open kitchen services, this alone will generate an average income of JD11,700 for the knowledge station. If 1% bought the cookbook, around JD 2,000 is generated.

If only 5% of international tourist coming to Madaba are to be interested in buying the hardcopy heritage map, this alone will generate an average income of JD3,900 for the knowledge station. If 1% bought the Map CDROM, around JD 2,000 is generated. If 1% decided to go around visiting people's homes then JD1000 is generated to KS.

In total, and not considering online advertising income and products sales, or snacks and fee for using ICT infrastructure of center, Madaba Knowledge Station would generate at a minimum and only from projects 1 to 4, around JD 30,500 per year.

Training in tourism is another income generating activity in the form of a not-for-profit project.

Other Potential Stakeholders

⇒ The Ministry of Tourism/ Directorate of Madaba Tourism – Operators of the Visitors Center: An MOU may be needed to ensure the use of the Visitors Center to display products and use its facilities for multimedia presentations

⇒ The Ministry of ICT through the e-Village Initiative: May be directly involved in digital content collection and offering the use of JADEER website

⇒ The Greater Madaba Municipality: An MOU may be needed in case Tourism Awareness Raising and Training project becomes into effect.

⇒ Community Based Organizations such as The Union of Women's Welfare Associations and Princess Basma Bint Talal Center (active NGOs in Madaba) which might help in digital collection and in implementing the Open Kitchen and the Dinner Hosting projects.

⇒ Professional associations such as JHA, JITOA, Jordan Travel Agencies

Association

3.4. Implementation Plan

The main detrimental factor in planning the implementation of the Pilot Project is the seasonality of tourism in Jordan. The second tourism season starts in September and continues through November. To benefit from this the Pilot Project should start at the latest by April and should be up and running by August. This in turn necessitates that all of the five project concepts should be developed in parallel.

In summary, the set up an launch of the program should be finalized by April. Directly the projects should be started with community outreach, collection of information from the local community, and building participation.

Promotional campaign should be triggered by June with brochures and flyers finalized by May.

All projects should be ready for launch by August.

Following is the perceived Implementation Timeline for the Pilot Project:

Action		2005									2006		
		Apr.	May	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.
Program Set Up & Launch		■											
Promotional Physical Activities	Flyers and Brochure Development - ready for distribution			■									
Promotional Physical Activities	Promotional campaign			■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Project Element 1	Knowledge Station Online Presence – Online information point and shop	■	■	■	■								
	Knowledge Station as Physical Shop and Visitor Center		■	■	■	■							
	Knowledge Station as Tourism Training Center										■	■	■
Project Element 2	Host Dinner Scheduling	■	■	■									
Project Element 3	Open Kitchen	■	■	■	■	■							
	Cookbook			■	■	■							
Project Element 4	Heritage Tour Maps and Trekking Trail Maps	■	■	■									
	Maps production				■	■							

3.5. Estimated Set Up Budget

Below is broad budget estimation for the setup of the Pilot Project assuming the use of one senior managerial staff responsible for the management of the project and one mid-level staff for running the daily operation, for a whole year.

A total of US$ 68,000 is estimated for the set up and running of the complete project concepts, **not taking into consideration that NITC may be playing a role as mentioned above.**

Cost Element	Estimate Annual Cost US$
Program Set Up	US$ 5,000
Senior level salaries - one person	US$ 12,000
Mid level salaries - one person	US$ 10,000
Promotional Physical Activities	US$ 10,000
Project 1 Concept A - website	US$ 10,000
Project 1 Concept B - shop	US$ 2,000
Project 1 Concept C - training	US$ 10,000
Project Concept 2 - Host Dinner Scheduling	US$ 3,000
Project Concept 3 - Open Kitchen and Cookbook (including design and production of cookbook)	US$ 3,000
Project Concept 5 - Heritage Tour Maps and Trekking Trail Maps (including design and production of maps)	US$ 3,000
Total Estimated Budget	**US$ 68,000**

PILOT PROJECT
CONCEPTS

Concept of Element
1
Knowledge Station Online Presence,
Physical and Shop and Visitor Center,
Tourism Training Centers Network

A - Knowledge Station Online Presence/ online information point and shop:

This project entails the development of an online website for the KS that acts as an online tourist information point as well as an online product and service offerings of the local community.

The National Tourism Strategy research stated that website development on the tourism market in Jordan is not good. This project concept responds to this fact as well as to other needs of the tourism sector exemplified in better promotion for tourism in Jordan and better informative displays and advertising of Jordan's tourist offerings. The KS website will provide a number of key services:

- Contact information and listings of the KS local area

- Information about the tourist offerings of the area

- Online window-shopping (display of products and prices) of locally made products such as handicrafts, foodstuffs etc. as well as the products produced by the KS through the previously-mentioned projects

- Booking and scheduling of tourism services

As such, this project entails the Knowledge Station acting as an online shop, and an information point including booking/scheduling service for the local services in town, for multinational and local tourists alike. The project will also serve as a promotional tool for the Knowledge Station services and products by providing the necessary tourism information on the local area, while also introducing the local products and services offered through the Knowledge Stations.

The website will provide a listing of local activities and services offered within the local community and area and through knowledge stations' cooperation with local communities. This will inform and encourage tourists, Jordanians and Tour Agencies to use this service as a reliable source of information on the tourism offerings in the area of the KS (what B&B accommodation exists in town? what is there to see? What is the most famous product of the area to buy? Where to eat? etc.); This will aid in attracting tourists to these areas and encourage more tourist spending as well as allow them to get the most out of their stay in Jordan.

Example of such local developed services include:

- Local guides for adventure/endurance activities: example, walking, trekking, camping, star gazing, rock climbing and also scientific and religious trails.

- Bedouin or camel caravans: allow tourists to view real Bedouin way of life, dress and cuisine.

- Visit local workshops: example, weaving or handicrafts; 'khubiz taboon' (traditional bread on clay oven) with a chance to participate in making the product and/or purchase products.

- Local Bed and Breakfasts: offer tourists inexpensive accommodation, clean sleeping premises and toilet facilities and home-made traditional food.

- Youth camps: opportunity for Jordanians and internationals to book youth camps across Jordan.

It will also provide booking services with the local B&B, restaurants, nature reserve camps, etc. wishing to advertise their existence in the area through the KS site, and accept booking through it.

An online window-display of the products available in the local community is also part of this website. The KS may provide e-commerce services if it chooses to develop e-payment gateways and other parties concerned in the process of providing e-transaction services, reliable delivery services etc.

Most importantly the website would also act as the promotional tool for the KS services that are described within the project concepts below, such as trekking guides recruitment, family dinner host scheduling, etc . .

Other free interactive services can be provided on the website in order to encourage as much user interaction as possible and encourage users to return to the portal in future (example: write name in Arabic on website, tourist e-cards, online recipes etc).

The online presence of the KS will be promoted through links from other national tourism sites such as the Knowledge Station Portal, JTB, MOTA, JITOA, JSTA, Hotelier Associations, Google, etc. It should also be promoted at tourism-related trade shows and conferences, through Hotel Touchpad Kiosks and brochures at hotel rooms, the airport and other visitor locations with the aim of reaching businesspeople, journalists, transit visitors, tour agents, Jordanian visitors, individual tourist etc. who should all be made aware of these services.

B - Knowledge Station as Physical Shop and Visitor Center

This project entails the Knowledge Station acting as a **physical** shop, and a **visitor center** where information, and booking/scheduling service for the local services in town can be done over the desk.

The Knowledge Stations will not only act as an intermediary gateway between the local community and the tour agencies (and other potential business partners) but also position itself as the village/town visitor information center. In this regard, the Knowledge Stations are providing an important tourist facility hugely lacking in areas across Jordan. Such a facility will encourage tour agencies and tourists to visit areas previously lacking in basic services. The Knowledge Station will be the closest point of information to the heritage sites, providing all needed information and directions to basic services.

The physical KS Shop will sell and showcase products made by the local community, such as homemade foods, handicrafts, postcards and greetings cards illustrating the local communities, and their natural and historical heritage. The Station will also sell the products it has produced such as the Cookbook of Local Recipes, the multimedia Presentations, the Story-Maps, etc.

The KS will also provide visitors with the ability to print and use the PC's to download and manipulate their digital photos, and data.

KS will also provide local-flavor snacks (e.g. Fresh 'Shrak" bread made by the local on the spot as well as honey and locally made cheese with tea) for group tours who had their visit previously arranged. Snacks can be served by the local persons with whom the KS has scheduled an appointment for them to greet and welcome the visitors on site.

C - Knowledge Station as Tourism Training Center

The socio-economic profiling studies for major locations in Jordan, namely Salt, Ajloun, Karak, Madaba and Jarash, indicate the urgent need for raising awareness in tourism and educating the people in the heritage and history of their area.[5] As such, the Knowledge Stations will be a network of base centers for training the locals in tourism ethics, expose them to tourism offerings in other countries world-wide which may result in activating creative thinking and new products, and increase their knowledge of the history and heritage of their surrounding area as well as offer foreign language training. The service will use ICT and multimedia to develop training material, and the Stations facilities to deliver the course.

Such a service may be in the form of a public Private Partnership with the Municipalities and Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities, carried out under a grant.

Revenue model:

The visitor center and shop will generate revenues from locally made products for sale at the shop, as well as quality products produced through the knowledge station. Maps, DVDs, paperbacks, and other products for sale will be the immediate form of revenue generating for the knowledge station center. A minimum percentage of the sale of the exhibited local products will also go to the Knowledge Station.

The use of multimedia services, Internet, PCs, printing, etc by visitors will be provided at a small cost.

KS snacks and tea events will be charged at JD2 per person, where 50% of the proceeds going to the welcoming locals hosting the visitors and the rest towards the Station's sustainability.

The website mainstream of income will be through online advertising of local tourist offerings and products and through booking services executed through the Station. Static advertisements can generate a fixed fee depending on the length of time it chooses to advertise on the website, while other advertisements can generate income per hit on the advertisement banner or page view.

Training courses in tourism may be funded as a PPP activity under a grant mechanism with an MOU/Contract drawn with the Municipality and/or MoTA.

Target:

Multi-National Tourists: The service will cater primarily to foreign tourists whether they are on vacation or business, arriving at the site and inquiring about tourist services in the town.

Local tourists: This comprehensive portal will encourage local tourists to visit areas across Jordan and explore their national heritage. It will also encourage locals to continue to access the portal and see what new products are available at certain knowledge stations (example: locally made cheeses, olives etc)

Tour Agencies: This service offers tour agencies the facility to expand their program and offer unique experiences to their clients. Tour agencies will also provide the website links to tourists in order for them to read and view services

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[5] Socio economic profiling of Madaba, November 2004, World Bank Jordan's Third Tourism Project/ Secondary Cities Revitalization Project, CDG

that they will participate in upon arrival to Jordan.

Local Community

Benefits:

Community involvement: The local community will be closely involved with the Knowledge Station in producing local products that would attract potential shoppers.

Tourist pull: Through promoting the area, its products and services, multinational tourists and Jordanians alike will be attracted to visit and spend money in the KS town/village.

Income Generation: The service will provide a direct form of income to the knowledge stations, through purchase of over the counter services and products.

Promotion of the area : The service will provide more opportunities to visit areas across Jordan, and support the Knowledge Station project

direct form of income to the knowledge stations, through purchase of over the counter services and products.

Linking Urban communities to Rural communities: The service will also provide Jordanians with local products that are otherwise unavailable to them due to inaccessibility to rural areas or unavailability in shopping markets in the city. These centers will be the location at which urban dwellers purchase locally made products advertised on the knowledge station portal.

Trained Community in Tourism.

Immediately Potential locations:

Above concepts can be offered at all Knowledge Stations but specifically at those that are at tourist destinations and along the tourist routes, especially since these towns/villages are lacking tourist information centers and places that display specific and non-common local communities' products. Please refer to tourist routes below.

Validation of project success:

This project was received positively with tour agents welcoming the availability of an online professional and comprehensive tourist visitor centers. Tour agents note that this was lacking for many tourist sites across Jordan, and that tourists need an information point to ask for services and to discover the area, whether they are overnight or day-trip tourists.

A number of tour agencies encouraged more inexpensive locally made handicrafts as tourist shops such as Bani Hamida were too expensive for the average tourist. Locally made products are not as available as they would like to present their tourist with. A number of tour agencies mentioned the need for more locally produced and handmade products, noting that many 'Arabic' products such as coffee cups were 'Made in China'. A number of tour agencies mentioned the tourist appeal to watch locals making their handicrafts and other products, which they can then buy. This would encourage them to purchase such handicrafts due to the cultural experience significance.

Tour agencies welcomed the online visitor center concept as it would provide

them and their tourists with access to listings of knowledge station services, products and locations. They were particularly attracted by the fact they could send a physical link to their clients advertising products they would offer through their tour package, such as host dinner services allowing tourists to participate **in planning their trip to their needs**. Tour agencies noted that around 40% of tourists have trips tailor-made or customized. Tour agencies with majority seat and coach tours still emphasized the need to customize each group's journey around Jordan. An online presence will definitely help them in locating new services.

In the long-term, tour operators encouraged the development of Knowledge Stations across the country and not only limited to those close to major tourist attractions. They said the alternative activities would encourage tourists to stay longer in the country. Also a 100 Knowledge Stations can offer training in Tourism. A network of such centers is very feasible and has the outreach and can achieve the impact required for such a service by the MoTA.

**Concept of Element
2
Host Dinner Scheduling**

Concept:

In response to cultural tourism and the need to create opportunities for the tourist to interact with the Jordanians first hand, the Knowledge Station will directly offer tourists, or coordinate with tour agents, a host dinner scheduling service allowing visitors to dine with a family from among the local community. This service will provide tourists with a rich cultural experience allowing them to interact with individual Jordanians, including women and children, and experience family life and cuisine in the rural countryside of Jordan.

Based on its community outreach, knowledge of the local families and community based organizations (CBO), the Knowledge Station has access to a wide base of potential host families.

Consequently the Knowledge Station will recruit host families by advertising the host dinner service primarily through word of mouth among the local community, and through advertisements at the station and through community based organizations. Host families will be carefully selected based on certain criteria which they will be screened against in order to qualify, criteria such as: reasonable size of family, foreign language knowledge, clean and spacious premises at home. The potential local host families interested in opening their homes to tourists will be trained in tourism ethics, and their knowledge of their area's heritage will be enriched

The service will be promoted through tour agencies, which have primary access to potential tourists. The service will also be promoted through the Knowledge Station portal, KS online website, through use of promotional tools such as links on the hotel touchpad kiosks and brochures at hotel rooms and airport. Online presence is important since it will offer potential tourists, already booked tourists, and tour agencies with a chance to view and choose the host family of their choice, based on the family profile, expertise in needed foreign, and location. Photos will be included where possible.

Revenue model:

The Knowledge Station will provide direct booking services for tourists either over the phone, over the desk at various Knowledge Stations, and through an online booking service. The service is estimated to cost JD10 per visitor, 60% going directly going back to the host family while the remainder going toward the sustainability of the Knowledge Station. This fee is comparable to the cost of an average dinner at a restaurant in Amman, with the added value of cultural experience.

Agreements with tour agencies must be determined whereby the tour agents pay directly to the KS, incorporating the fee in their overall tourist package. Tour agents will also provide necessary tourist transportation.

Target:

Multi-National Tourists: The service will cater primarily to foreign tourists whether they are on vacation or business, as the host dinner provides a unique cultural experience that visitors look for during their stay in Jordan.

Tour Agencies: This service offers tour agencies the facility to expand their program and offer unique experiences to their clients. Currently the tour agents find it difficult to locate the hosts and arrange such popular events among their clients. As such tour agents welcome this outreach to local communities provided by the KS and the service provided.

Benefits:

Tourist pull: The service creates a direct tourist pull to the area.

Income Generation: The service will provide specific host families with extra earnings and encourage tourist spending in the town, while sustaining the KS.

Cultural interaction: The service will allow tourists to interact with Jordanians and experience traditional customs and hospitality that Jordan is renowned for. It will also provide visitors with an opportunity to view the traditional role of the Jordanian/Arab woman, in the private and respected space of her home and among family. This is important due to the limited exposure of Jordanian/Arab women at tourist locations.

Branding of the area: The tourist will be exposed to the traditional habits and culture unique to the Jordanian families of the area as well as other local products that the area is famous for. Consequently, branding of the area will be promoted (e.g. Madaba is known for its traditional kitchen, mosaics, crochets items, etc.)

Trained community: The service will help in raising local communities' overall level of tourism awareness and receptiveness, by providing host families with training on how to deal with tourists. The training will also add to their knowledge of the village/town heritage assets allowing them to interact with their guests. On the whole, this will result in a receptive community that welcomes future tourists arriving for alternative services generated by the community or the Knowledge Station.

Immediately Potential locations:

This service will succeed in villages/towns where tourists have the ability to stay overnight such as Madaba, Karak, Wadi Musa (Petra) and Ajloun or at locations that are near to Amman such as Salt and, again, Madaba.

In particular Karak and Petra, the overnight tourist are not offered any activities during the evening, after site closing hours. Therefore, this service will be in high demand at those areas. Similarly is the case for tourists staying overnight in Madaba.

As for Salt and Madaba which are near to Amman and can be accessed during the day or night, tourists staying in Amman and looking for a culturally enriching experience can take up these nearby services, especially if transportation is provided by the tour agent.

Validation of project success:

This project received a positive response from interviewed tour agencies. Tour agencies stated that the service, already tried and tested by their clients, was a major success factor among tourists. Yet tour agencies said they find it increasingly difficult to organize the service themselves especially now that it is growing in demand. In fact one agent mentioned that the 'dining with a local' service is done at houses of the employees at the tour agency itself and is not always easy. As such, they encouraged the Knowledge Stations Program to provide this as an organized service.

Another aspect is that Locals must be prepared for the different cultures and tourist behavior they will be exposed to in their village/town. People must be made aware not to exploit or pester tourists, and Local dinner hosts must be educated not to criticize Jordanians of different backgrounds than themselves, such as Muslim, Christian, Palestinian or Jordanian citizens. As such training is required.

Concept of Element
3
Open Kitchen and Cookbook

Concept:

The open kitchen service provides an immediate response to the need for more cultural-related tourist activities, while also facilitating community involvement and digital content building.

The concept of this project start with encouraging the local community women in providing traditional recipes that they cook at home for their families. Each woman that provides a recipe to the KS will be reimbursed by free Internet surfing time for her or a member of her house or free IT related training session. The recipes will be linked to their provider who can have the chance to host tourists for a cooking session including a shopping trip for the ingredients.

The compilation of traditional recipes of the area will lead to the development of a cook book of the town/village (e.g. the Madaba Traditional Meals cookbook). The cookbook will be enhanced with photos contributed from the open kitchen sessions, as mentioned below. This product maybe produced in hardcopy or on CDROM to be sold to interested visitors.

The open kitchen will offer tourists the cultural experience where they can learn to prepare an Arabic meal in a relaxed and informal atmosphere along with local women, under the supervision of the local women, who have actually supplied the recipes for the cookbook. While learning to make a typical Jordanian meal that includes soup, cold and hot mezza and salads, and the main course, visitors will also have a fun and special dining experience giving them a chance to make friends through personal interaction with locals.

The Knowledge Station will schedule the open kitchen cooking sessions with the local women. The offering will include shopping for the ingredients from the local meat and vegetable market place and meal cooking at the woman's home or at the premises of the community based organization.

The Knowledge Station will invite recipe exchange and promote the open kitchen services by advertising primarily through word of mouth among the local community, and through advertisements at its station and through CBOs. Women interested in hosting tourists for cooking sessions will be carefully selected based on certain criteria such as foreign language knowledge or ability to provide it through a third party, clean and spacious premises at home, or premises of the CBO.

The potential host women will also be trained in tourism ethics, providing them with an enriched knowledge of their local heritage.

The service will be promoted by the Knowledge Station to tour agencies, who have primary access to tourists. The service will provide tour agencies with further incentives to attract tourists to Jordan. The service will also be promoted through the Knowledge Station portal, through promotional tools such as touchpad's and brochures at hotels and the airport, and through the KS online website. This will offer potential and already booked tourists, and tour agencies, with a chance to view the open kitchen services, including the meals and open kitchen locations.

Another promotional link is through serving sweets made by the women at front reception desks of hotels for tourists to sample. A nearby message of where to learn how to cook and prepare them will be placed pointing to the Knowledge

Station website and location.

The Knowledge Station will act a direct booking service for tourists and tour agencies wishing to include the service on their tour itinerary. Booking may also be done through the knowledge stations online booking service.

Revenue model:

The open kitchen service will cost JD15 per head, accepting a minimum of four people per cooking session. This will ensure that all overheads are controlled. A 40% percentage of the charge will go back toward the sustainability of the Knowledge Station.

The cookbook will also be sold in paperback and on CDROM, price is recommended not to exceed JD 5.

Agreements with tour agencies must be determined whereby the tour agents pay directly to the KS, incorporating the fee in their overall tourist package. Tour agents will also provide necessary tourist transportation.

Target:

Multi-National Tourists: The service will cater primarily to foreign tourists whether they are on vacation or business, as the open kitchen provides a unique cultural experience that visitors look for during their stay in Jordan.

Tour Agencies: This service offers tour agencies the facility to expand their program and offer unique experiences to their clients. Tour agencies currently complain that there are not enough cultural activities for tourists.

Benefits:

Tourist pull: This service will provide a direct tourist pull to the community, attracting them directly to the open kitchen service, as well as encouraging tourist spending in the village/town.

Digital Content Building

Community branding: This service will provide the village/town with a reputation for this unique interactive service and the local cuisine cooked up in that community, helping each Knowledge Station to stand out from the next. It will also promote these areas on a national scale, marking them on the map according to their traditional foods and hospitality.

Cultural interaction: The service will allow tourists to interact with Jordanians on a personal level while experiencing the warmth and hospitality that Jordan is renowned for. It will also provide visitors with an opportunity to interact with Arab women from the community, teaching tourists how to prepare their traditional meals. This is important due to the limited exposure of Arab women at tourist locations.

Community exposure: The service exposes individuals from the local community to foreigners through direct and personal interaction. This service is as much a cultural experience to locals as it is to tourists, helping to narrow the gap between different cultures, through the casual and enjoyable atmosphere of cooking.

Immediately Potential locations:

The cookbook side of this project will of course work in many Knowledge Stations across Jordan.

The open kitchen on the other hand will be successful mostly in villages/towns where tourists have the ability to stay overnight such as Madaba, Karak, and Ajloun or at locations that are near to Amman such as Salt and, again, Madaba[6].

Validation of project success:

This project was received positively by both the tour agencies. They are already very enthusiastic about the 'Petra Kitchen', and encouraged similar tourists attractions, emphasizing that the cultural experience involved in this activity was a major incentive for tourists to take part. They also welcomed similar services in order to provide more interactions with the local community and specifically women. One even recalled a client asking where women were in Jordan, indicating the lack of community at tourist destinations and the consequent need to provide alternative community-related services.

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[6] Please note that a similar concept exits in Petra and is currently extremely successful. It is called the 'Petra Kitchen'

Concept of Element

4
Heritage Tour Maps and Trekking Trail Maps

Concept:

In response to digital content building and generating income for KS through tourism, maps will be developed which can guide the tourist through the town's streets and past its heritage buildings and monuments.

Based on its community outreach, the Knowledge Station has access to the persons most knowledgeable of the area and its heritage. Not-to-scale but clear maps can be sketched of the local routes of the town with the help of the local community with monuments and landmarks drawn on them. The colloquial tales which may be historical, legend, or a folk traditionally known story of each significant location (e.g. heritage house, statue, and archaeological site) will be put on the map adjacent to its related monument/location. Those stories of separate places and their oral history may be gathered from senior citizens. Also, owners of heritage buildings may tell the story of their house, who occupied it, its role in the history of Jordan etc.

This will generate a Story-Map product that provides a history of the local area related to its places. The tourist uses the map during his/her walk around the town and have an enriched experience from the tales s/he can read.

The maps may be printed in hard copy for the tourist to buy and use on his/her tour in the area/town/village and may be developed as an interactive map of the area to be distributed on CDROMs. Photos may be gathered, recorded and sorted on the CDROM interactive maps as well.

Such products may be displayed at Visitors Centers or at Hotels and souvenir shops. They may also be demo-ed and on the KS portals or the specific website of the Station.

A link between the map and the owner of a heritage building may also be established whereby the KS (e.g. in Madaba) can schedule with the owners, tourists and/or tour agencies an open-house event for tourists wishing to look around inside a certain house and see the old utensils and artifacts of the era. The knowledge station must carefully screen the participants and service providers.

Maps may also be for walking or trekking trails. Maps may respond to different theme trails such as religious, cultural, archeological, adventure or respond to specific interest groups with tailored to their needs such as bird watching, flower collection, animal watching, etc.

Local guides may develop maps of the trekking trails they know by pointing out interesting sites and natural spots on the map, as well as the easy paths and the strenuous paths to walk. Those maps are tools to be used by the adventurous tourist on a hiking vacation in Jordan. KS of Ajloun, Azraq, Tafileh, and Dana can coordinate with the Royal Scientific Society for Nature on trekking excursions and maps around the Natural Reserves while the KS in Wadi Musa, and Karak can develop the Wadi Rum, and Wadi Moujeb maps respectively. All the time linking the trekking guides from the community to their maps and services. Again the KS should screen the guides and ensure their proficiencies, as well as check the trails.

The scheduling of heritage tour service and trekking guides service will be promoted among and through tour agencies with primary access to arriving tourists. They will also be promoted through environmental and scientific organizations such as Friends of the Environment (FoE), and the Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature (RSCN) as well as archaeological institutes (e.g. ACOR). The service will also be promoted through the Knowledge Station online portal, through use of promotional tools such as links on the touchpad kiosks and brochures at hotels and airport.

Revenue model:

The map products can be sold for a fee to tourists at various Knowledge Station locations and points of presence such as Shop and Visitors' Centers, relevant NGOs and Tour Agencies as part of their tour package. They can also be sold over the Internet as e-commerce products on the website of KS. Suggested KS pricing should be well under US$10 (for example JD 5 for an interactive CDROM Map, JD 2 for a hardcopy map).

The Knowledge Station will provide direct booking services to tour agents or RSCN/NGO for trekking guides who have supplied their routes for the production of the trekking maps. A tour agency or an NGO should provide a percentage fee for this service to the KS.

Scheduled heritage tours with owners of buildings is estimated to cost JD2 per visitor, JD 1 directly going back to the host and JD1 to the Knowledge Station. Agreement with tour agents has to be determined whereby the tour agents pay directly to the KS while they incorporate the fee in their overall tourist package. Tour agents will also provide the tourist transportation.

Target:

Multi-National Tourists: The service will cater primarily to foreign tourists visiting archaeological and heritage locations in Jordan such as Madaba, and Karak where tourist can go around on their own in the city, as well as visiting businesspeople and individual tourists, who are keen to explore rural parts of Jordan and discover its cultural heritage.

Tour Agencies: This service offers tour agencies the facility to expand their program and offer unique experiences to their clients. They can also lengthen the stay of the tourist in the place and provide him/her with in depth cultural knowledge.

Tour Agencies and NGOs offering Adventurous Programs: Currently the RSCN/NGO and tour agents find it difficult to locate adventure trekking guides. They can also widen their selection of trails as suggested and mapped by the local guides. RSCN and tour agents welcome this outreach to local communities provided by the KS and the service provided.

Jordanian Visitors and Hikers: Jordanian youth wishing to trek Jordan and visit its reserves can directly locate their guide and/or buy the maps to use on their own. Moreover, Jordanians, primarily from urban areas, wishing to discover Jordan and so provide them with the services and informational maps to use.

Benefits:

Income Generation: The service will be providing specific host families with extra earnings while also encouraging tourist spending in the village/town. It will also contribute to the sustainability of the KS.

Digital Content Building for the area: Content building of the area will provide a potential for further product development and also give Knowledge Stations a continued flow of revenue as the demand for their copyrighted products grows and sales increase.

Community involvement: The local community will be closely involved with the Knowledge Station in documenting stories and landmarks of the town and the surrounding areas.

Linkage Services: Linking the tour agents and individual visitor(s) to the local guides and to the community.

Local tourist pull: This will provide Jordanians with more out of town activities, allowing them to discover and appreciate their cultural and natural heritage. Tourists will be encouraged to visit and explore these trails and consequently use other services at the village/town.

Specific interest groups: Besides encouraging tourists, both foreign and local, it will also encourage people with specific interest groups, encouraging an alternative tourist type to the country.

Immediately Potential locations:

While Jordan enjoys a vast landscape of unspoiled natural heritage - allowing for countless possible locations, the most immediate trails to be developed could be at areas where tourists are already present but lacking in added-value activities, such as Petra, Dead Sea, Wadi Rum, Madaba, Ajloun, Wadi Mujib, Dana, etc.

Validation of project success:

Tour agencies reacted positively to this service, commenting that it would provide a growing interest groups/ tourists with activities to suit their needs. One tour agent commented that as these type of trails do not exist in Jordan, the project would encourage an alternative type of tourist (interest group), and thus encourage more tourists, from the region and internationally, to visit Jordan.

ANNEXES

ANNEX A

I.   Tourist Routes

The following trunk routes are typically used by tour agents. Knowledge Stations along them are eligible to develop the project concepts of the KS-Tourism Program as mentioned below:

- places with knowledge stations are **Bolded** *(please refer to Annex A for locations of Knowledge Stations).*

1. Amman - Jerash **- <u>Ajloun</u>**[*1] - Um Qais - Amman

2. Amman - Jerash – Ajloun - Pella – Amman

3. Amman - Jerash - Um Qais - Pella – overnight Dead Sea

4. Amman – Harranah Castle – Amra Castle – Azraq Castle – Amman

5. Amman - Dead Sea - Madaba - Mount Nebo - Amman

6. **Madaba**[*2] **-** Mount Nebo - Bethany (Baptism Site) – Amman

7. Madaba – Mount Nebo - Wadi Moujeb – **Rabba** - Karak – Petra (overnight)

8. Madaba – Mount Nebo- **Karak** – **Tafielah** – **Bseira** – **Dhana** [*4] – **Shobak** – Wadi Musa

9. Dead Sea – Ghor Fifa - Tafielah – Bseira – **Dhana** – Shobak – **Wadi Musa** [*3]

10. Dead Sea – **Ghor Mazra'a** – Karak *via Desert highway* – Wadi Musa

11. Wadi Musa – Qweira - Wadi Rum – Aqaba

12. Amman - **Azraq** Castle – Azraq wetland reserve

13. Amman - Shomari Reserve

14. Amman City tour - **Jerash** - Back to Amman

15. Petra - Wadi Rum - Aqaba (stay for period)

16. Amman - **Aqaba** – Amman

17. Amman - Petra - Amman   via *Desert highway*

*1   Ajloun KS and Anjara KS may be applicable
*2   A visit to Madaba may also include a visit to Bani Hameeda - As such Bani Hamida KS may
         be applicable
*3   Wadi Musa destination may be s stay at Taybet Zaman - As such Taybeh KS may be
         applicable
*4   A new KS at Dhana will soon be opened

II.   Knowledge Station Locations

There are over 100 Knowledge Stations distributed across the 12 governorates in Jordan; Ajloun (5), Amman (20), Aqaba (4), Balqa (9), Irbid (16), Jerash (6), Kerak (9), Ma'an (7), Madaba (4), Mafraq (8), Tafileh (3), and Zarqa (9).

The names of each Knowledge Station according to their location are as follows:

Ajloun
Kufranja Knowledge Station
Ebeen Knowledge Station
Wahadneh Knowledge Station
Ajloun Knowledge Station
Anjara Knowledge Station

Amman
Queen Rania Knowledge Station
Iraq Al-Amir Knowledge Station
Karma Knowledge Station
Sahab Knowledge Station
Hussein Refugee Camp Knowledge Station
Nasr Refugee Camp Knowledge Station
Qweismeh Knowledge Station
Al-Bayader Knowledge Station
Princess Eman Knowledge Station (Al-Yarmouk
Hashemi Al-Shamali Knowledge Station
Na'our Knowledge Station
Sweileh Knowledge Station
Marj Al-Hamam Knowledge Station
Jeeza Knowledge Station
Tareq Knowledge Station
Mgabelein Knowledge Station
Marka Knowledge Station
Jabal Al-Taj Knowledge Station
Eskan Abu-Nusair Knowledge Station
Hussein Society Knowledge Station

Aqaba
Aqaba Knowledge Station
Risha Knowledge Station
Qwera Knowledge Station
Higher Council Knowledge Station

Balqa
Fuheis Knowledge Station
Damya Knowledge Station

Salt Knowledge Station
Baqa'a Refugee Camp Knowledge Station
Abu Nusair Knowledge Station
Deir Alla Knowledge Station
Karama Knowledge Station
Yarga Knowledge Station
Ein Al-Basha Knowledge Station

Irbid
Deir Abi-Sa'eed Knowledge Station
Taybeh/Irbid Knowledge Station
Ramtha Knowledge Station
Irbid Knowledge Station
Huson Knowledge Station
North Shuna Knowledge Station
North Mazar Knowledge Station
Huson Refugee Camp Knowledge Station
Malka Knowledge Station
Beit Ras Knowledge Station
Deir Yousef Knowledge Station
Sareih Knowledge Station
Kufr Awan Knowledge Station
Tabaqet Fahel Knowledge Station
Kufr Asad Knowledge Station
Turra Knowledge Station

Jerash
Kittah Knowledge Station
Jerash Knowledge Station
Bab Amman Knowledge Station
Borma Knowledge Station
Jerash Refugee Camp Knowledge Station
Kufr Khal Knowledge Station

Kerak
Karak Knowledge Station
Ghor Al-Safi Knowledge Station
Rabbah Knowledge Station
Ai Knowledge Station
Qatraneh Knowledge Station
Ghor Al-Mazra'ah Knowledge Station
Residential City of Potash Knowledge Station
Moab Knowledge Station
Mu'tah Knowledge Station

Ma'an
Shobak Knowledge Station
Taybeh/Wadi-Musa Knowledge Station
South Society for Special Education Knowledge Station
Ma'an Knowledge Station
Husseiniya Knowledge Station
Mregha Knowledge Station
Ail Knowledge Station

Madaba

Madaba Knowledge Station
Mlieh Knowledge Station
Bni Hamida Knowledge Station
Ma'ein Knowledge Station

Mafraq
Prince Hussein Knowledge Station (Safawi)
Mafraq Knowledge Station
Khalediyya Knowledge Station
Balama Knowledge Station
Sabha Knowledge Station
Erhab Knowledge Station
Um El-Quttein Knowledge Station
Roweished Knowledge Station

Tafileh
Tafileh Knowledge Station
Hasa Knowledge Station
Bsera Knowledge Station

Zarqa
Zarqa Knowledge Station
Hashemiyya Knowledge Station
Hittin Refugee Camp Knowledge Station
Dhulail Knowledge Station
Azraq Knowledge Station
Rusaifa Knowledge Station
Zarqa Municipality Knowledge Station
Sokhna Knowledge Station
Zarqa Refugee Camp Knowledge Station

<u>ANNEX B</u>

<u>List of Interviewed Stakeholders</u>

1- Dr. Yousef Nusseir, Director General, National Information Technology Center

2- Mr. Oliver Meyrick, Field Director, Digital Opportunity Trust (Netcorps)

3- Mr. Khaled Irani, Director General, Royal Society for Conservation of Nature

4- Ms. Razan Fasheh, MoICT

5- Ms. Mervat Ha'oubsh-Khalil, MOTA

6- Mr. Mohannad Malhas, Managing Director, Abercrombie & Kent Jordan

7- Mr. Maged Elsadek, General Manager, Trust Tours Agency

8- Mr. Mahmoud Baddar, General Manager, GAT – Green Arrows Tours

9- Mr. Naiel Riyal, Sales Director, Plaza Tours

10- Mr. Mazen Kannaan, Managing Director, PIONEERS

11- Mr/ Samer Muasher, Managing Director, Discovery Tours

12- Mr. Wael Dakkak, Director of Sales and Marketing, Dakkak Tours International

13- Mr. Omran Dakkak, General Manager, Dakkak Tours International

14- Mr. Samer Sawalha, General Manager, Space Tours

ANNEX C

Minutes of Meeting With Tour Agencies

Tour Agency 1

Interviewee noted that his tourists are mostly individuals; therefore he caters to specific needs not typical tourist excursions.
Such tourists would like to:
- Avoid typical tourist attractions
- Want a local flavor at each stop.
- Buy local products, bread, vegetables, homemade pickles, herbs, cheeses etc.
    - These could be on display homemade products or local produce at the KS with further details provided if tourists want to visit the local shops.
- Brochures about the town
- History of families of the town, pictures of 70 years back etc.
- RSCN programs – should consider similar idea as they have their own attraction themes (nature-related) and their own bases across Jordan to take their visitors.
- Tourists want to see locals participating in cultural/Arab things.
    - Example, one tourist said the highlight of his trip was seeing a boy riding a donkey on a highway
- Stay at a local place, with locals, eat local food.
- Have a tea house at the KS
    - A few families are invited to have tea at this spot which tourists can be taken to specifically interact with these locals.
    - Real Arabic setting, on floor, serve local pastries etc

- Tailor tourist services at each KS according to the location.
    - Example, el-Ghour example - trip to a local farm
- Hiking is back in. More organized activities.

Tour Agency 2

- Suggested a Knowledge Station in Petra:
    - o Tourists could listen to a 10-minute presentation at a Knowledge Station located by a ticket booth while waiting for their guide to purchase their tickets. Must be short and inexpensive.
    - o Tourists are tight time wise and therefore Knowledge Stations will seem unattractive if it means taking them away from the reason they are there in the first place: example Petra.
    - o Knowledge Stations could be developed in areas where sites close in evening and tourists are left with nothing to do but stay in the hotel. Use the hotels.
    - o Must be catchy, attractive in terms of looks and content.
- Knowledge Station services must be available in foreign languages, example Spanish and Italian.
- KS tour guides must be inexpensive and certified.
- Lonely Planet equivalent could be provided: offering alternative services, things to do, cafes to go to etc. Places of interest to internationals.
- Accommodation can be developed:
    - o There are no decent 3 or 4 star hotels outside of Amman.
    - o No B&Bs – decent food, clean bed and bathroom etc.
    - o Concept of hospitality/ need to educate people.
- Touch-pads could be located at hotels outside of Amman where tourists have no plans and nowhere to go after site visits. The presence of the Knowledge Station is needed in these places.
- KS tourist activities:
    - o Activities promoted by the KS are difficult to promote to the average tourist
    - o These activities would mean an extra day of their vacation time, extra money spent and extra hotel nights.
    - o Cultural-seeking tourists are satisfied enough with their typical tourist package (Petra, Dead Sea, Wadi Rum etc) as this seems culturally fulfilling enough for them.
- Develop areas where services are lacking and expand on them:
    - o Consider sites/ centers even if they aren't on the most visited routes at present time.
    - o Knowledge Stations could help direct tourists to restaurants, rest points etc.
- Suggested airport presence:
    - o Promoting Knowledge Station services to pre-arrival tourists – as an insert on Royal Jordanian in-flight magazine
    - o Knowledge Station desk at luggage point or exit point.

Tour Agency 3

- Interviewee expressed enthusiasm at idea of offering more tour services to his tourists, emphasizing however that they must be culturally-related.
- Very enthusiastic about 'Petra Kitchen' and encourages more tourists attractions such as these, that involve the tourist in community services
- Local products:
  - Local products are too expensive for average tourist who is willing to pay between $1-10 per item. Bani Hamida etc products too expensive.
  - Need to be made in Jordan, not China, and must be unique.
  - Send tourists to villages etc to watch local products being made. Experience of watching them made plus much cheaper.
- Exposing Knowledge station services to tourists:
  - Developing Touch-screen in hotels, hooked up to Knowledge Stations
  - Willingness to advertise on this portal/touch screen links ex. Yearly payment to advertise his tour agency
- Tourist needs:
  - Desire to see, interact with Arab women. (tourist sites lack local community and tourist interaction)
  - Experience local culture.
  - Cultural exposure, education and involvement:
    - For example, host dinner at a village family home (eat with family and get picked up by bus at 10pm). Allows interaction with Jordanian family. Must speak some English.
    - For example. Stay few days with real Bedouin family (not fake tent reenactment). Train the host to feed tourists food their stomachs can handle, clean water etc.
    - Experience cultural and social life from A-Z: recreate local weddings, ask for the hand, traditional village weddings, tribal problems and solutions, social customs, why 3 cups of coffee, why we eat mansaf, why we where the hatta, etc (reenactments, cultural village and/or CD presentation).
    - Bed and breakfasts (B&Bs) in these areas.
- Educating guides and improving signage:
  - Local and country guides need training, certification needs updating.
  - Re-educating guides and local communities how to deal with tourists (contact Mustafa Kiwan)
  - Have tours and guides provide documents relieving them of accidental injuries etc.
  - Providing safe travel information:
    - Maps with notices for places to watch out from (example, drop in a cave, etc)
    - Guides educate tourists before trails, and give plenty of warning before approaching unsafe areas.
- Cooperation with RSCN:
  - Develop nature trails and trips further.

Tour Agency 4

Suggested that certain activities be developed:
- Locally-made handicrafts and woodcrafts.
  - Give it a help the community touch – Queen Rania community projects
- Adventure/endurance tourism:
  - There are no related programs existing in Jordan. No agency would be able to provide a group of athletes with a program that would suit their needs.
  - Cycling/ rock climbing/ hiking/ walking through Dibeen forest etc.
  - Routes/guides need to be developed to cater for such trails.
- Promote Dead Sea as a sunny destination for Scandinavians with 2-week government paid holiday.

- Even if a tourist wants to stay in Jordan for more than the 3-day average, example an 8 day stay, the tour agency finds it difficult to find activities to fill in their time.
- Interviewee said he wouldn't see the Petra Knowledge Station a success in terms of multimedia presentations. Tourists won't want to pay extra. He said that tourists there are already exploited enough. They pay JD25 entrance fee, plus other fees and are also constantly pestered from the beginning of the trip until the end by locals who know how to beg in every language.
- The Knowledge Station as a shop might work, selling DVDs etc about the site just visited. Develop tourist shops.
- Most tourists coming to Jordan are interested in the old civilization not the current or recent history of the place.
- He said the Knowledge Station initiative could provide added value to the tourists stay, if it is done right. More alternatives, more programs will do them a huge service and make life much easier for them as tour agencies.
- Host dinner concept: He said that this is a good idea, but advised strongly that the families are screened and trained. He warned that Knowledge Stations must not be selective when recruiting, example only Palestinians, Jordanians, Christians or Muslims families. Families must also commit to certain standards, not bad-mouthing other religions, sects etc.

Tour Agency 5

- Interested in the idea of Knowledge Stations offering culturally related services.
- Suggested his own services that he currently offers, but welcomes an comprehensive and ready service of such activities:
    - Learn to make Turkish coffee, with a real Bedouin on a fire.
    - Speech given by Bedouins on their way of life, raising children etc.
    - Learn to dance dabkeh
    - Shop for pastries, sweets etc
    - Learn to write phrases and write name in Arabic
- He emphasized services be offered in multiple languages
- Northern Routes:
    - Jerash – Um Qais – Ajloun – Pella
    - Madaba – Nebo – Karak – Petra
- Southern Routes:
    - Baptism site + Dead Sea
    - Petra – Wadi Rum – Aqaba
- Promoted sites needed
- He said these new tourist services and activities would encourage more spending by the tourist and longer stay.

Tour Agency 6

- Does not see a realistic use by tourists of Internet or multimedia services at these Knowledge Stations, arguing that the limited length of time a tourist has during their excursions around Jordan does not permit them to waste this time using services they will use back at the hotel in Amman later in the evening.
- Suggests promoting the concept of 'helping community' services that would give tourists an incentive to visit such areas as they know they will be contributing to the sustainability of that local community.
- Watch women make local products
- Interaction with locals, but short time at each stop and also the number of guards patrolling them and keeping locals away from them makes this difficult.
- Dinners with locals but outside of Amman.
- Camel caravan
- Most sites are not equipped for tourists, example no toilets, rest stops, water, or no guards or site manager at certain sites/ destinations. This discourages tour agencies from sending their tourists to such locations.

Tour Agency 7 - Phone Interview

Emphasized strong need for cultural activities
- Bedouin culture needs to be enhanced. People dressed in proper clothes not jeans. Many tents and sheep and smoke, not plastic chairs laying everywhere etc. Something the tourist will be excited to see and get down and take pictures with this authentic community.
- Wadi Rum 4x4 cars need to be changed. Tourists want old cars, authentic 4x4's (assuming he means Indiana Jones/ adventure style to attract tourists)